THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) There is already one centre of All India Coordinated Research Project on Floriculture at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. This Centre is catering to the needs of the region.

Direct purchase of cotton from growers

2776. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to purchase cotton directly from the cotton growers, and eliminate middlemen between the farmers and CCI; and

(b) the action taken to assist the cotton farmers in ensuring reasonable prices of cotton produced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), a Central nodal agency, makes purchases directly from Cotton growers in the regulated market. CCI extends its infrastructure by utilizing the Co-operative set up in each State.

(b) To protect the interest of cotton farmers the Government: (i) fixes Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for different varieties of cotton during each season and authorizes the CCI to undertake price support operation if market prices touch MSP level, (ii) hiked the import duty on cotton from 5 per cent to 10 per cent to restrain import, (iii) made cotton export free with effect from July, 2001 dispensing with the earlier export quota of different agencies and the

need for obtaining certificate and registration from the Office of the Textile Commissioner, Mumbai, and (iv) launched the Technology Mission on Cotton with four Mini Missions with the objectives of increasing production and productivity, reducing costs and improving its quality.

Allocation to Andhra Pradesh under NPDP

2777. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated and released to Andhra Pradesh under the National Pulses Development Project (NPDP), during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the districts covered under NPDP in the State, area of coverage and production of pulses during the said period; and

(c) to what extent production of pulses in the State under NPDP has increased?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The amount allocated and released to Andhra Pradesh under the National Pulses Development Project (NPDP) during the last three years is given below:

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Allocation	Release
1999-2000	105.00	105.00
2000-2001	91.00	91.00
2001-2002	91.00	87.00